Dragon Knights

Mineko Ohkami

24

TOKYOPOP

Tetheus, Rune, and Thetz encounter Shydeman and Fedelta in the Dragon Castle's sanctuary, where Shydeman awakens the mourning monster Yusurugi. Our heroes must band together and combine the powers of the Blizzard Sword and the Furious Fire Sword if they are to have any chance of defeating Yusurugi! But will they have enough power to stop Shydeman and Fedelta first?

"An epic tale that any lover of fantasy can become addicted to."

–Sheena McNeil, *Sequential Tart*

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FANTASY

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DRAGON KNIGHTS 24

押上美猫

Mineko Ohkami

Dragon Knights

Written and Illustrated by
Mineko Ohkami

Volume 24

TOKYOPOP

HAMBURG // LONDON // LOS ANGELES // TOKYO

THE DRAGON LORD & THE DEMON LORD:

A HISTORY OF THE BATTLE TO CONTROL DUSIS

AS PENNED BY

CERNOZURA

CHIEF ADMINISTRATOR OF THE

DRAGON CASTLE IN THE HEART OF DUSIS

The Keeper of the Tome

My name is Cernozuro and I am the chief administrator for the Dragon castle Draguera, in the heart of Dragoon, the Dragon Kingdom. Within these pages, I will attempt to chronicle the events of yesteryear in the hopes that it will in turn offer some future understanding of the chaos that currently befalls us. I feel it's imperative that I record a comprehensive history of the events that have led to this dark hour, for I fear that none will remain to tell the tale. My only hope is that this tome may survive so that future generations will know of the valiance of the Dragon Tribe.

Rise of the Demon Lord

Our worst fears have come to pass. The Demon Lord Nadil has been resurrected, and he has stolen from the bosom of our care the fortuneteller Cesia, who harbors an incredible magic that we have only just begun to witness. In the service of a villain as pernicious as Nadil, Cesia, whether against her will or willingly giving in to the seductive charm of the dreaded Demon Lord, may prove to be the most dangerous threat we've faced.

Into the Abyss

The Dragon Knights have been dispatched to Rannaldia, the kingdom of the Demon Lord, charged with rescuing Cesia. While their journey was not without its share of peril, all three Knights have at last gained entry to Nadil's castle, an ominous-looking fortress that rests atop a dead island surrounded by an ocean of souls. And remarkably, they were not the only ones.

In addition to the thousands of demons that swear allegiance to Nadil, there is at least one who doesn't. Zoma, the small, winged demon, has long been a companion of Cesia. Attempting to bring her the powerful wind staff that was bequeathed to us by the Star Princess, Zoma has joined with Ritchel, a thief who has proven herself to be a loyal ally to Lykouleon, Ringleyr, Ritchel's faerie companion, and Tintles, Rune's beloved. They too have gained entrance to Nadil's palace, and word has reached our fortress that they have joined forces with the Dragon Knights.

It seems our heroes need whatever help they can accrue, as all three Knights have been captured and are now imprisoned in Nadil's tank dungeon. Rath however, currently suffers in solitude in a hell of a different sort. It has been revealed that the Demon Lord shares a dark bond with the Dragon Knight of Fire. It's a connection that has taken root within their very souls, and it appears that nothing can be done to lift it.

As Zoma searches for Cesta, Rath also suggests that Zoma be his replacement so that he and the Dragon Clan can be free. Zoma finds Cesta in her dark form, but her goodness manages to fight through and regain control over her body. Zoma shape-shifts into a large bird, and with Cesta on his back, plunges into the Sea of the Dead that surrounds the castle. It is there that Cesta is reunited with the chain-bound Rath. She frees him from bondage, but countless battles against all manners of demons have taken a toll upon his flesh.

If the Dragon Realm is to find victory against the demon horde that has plagued it for centuries, Rath must sacrifice his very life. Cesta vows to find Rath's spirit a corporeal body, and uses the Sacred Dragon Eye to transport her and the Knights to the western continent of Duras. Gil discovers that the Lauma Gasnas who tried to kill him is Lauma in body only. Even more vexing is the realization that Lauma's spirit is trapped in a monster's body. In a twist of tragic irony, the monster kills Lauma, which by result kills itself.

Meanwhile, Saabel and Garaba begin to destroy the castle...but the sudden arrival of Tinlet opens a door to the foreign world through which Saabel's memories are restored. As Saabel begins to die, Shyleeman sends demons through the mysterious door. Shortly afterward, a fierce earthquake rocks the castle...

The Heroes of Dragon Knights

Lord Lykouleon

The beloved Dragon Lord Lykouleon is the sovereign ruler of Dragonia. The awareness of the Dragon Clan and the might of the Dragon Army are all his command!

Lady Raseleane

Lykouleon's queen the Lady Raseleane was rendered human by the Demon Lord and unable to provide Lykouleon with an heir.

Dragon Officers

Harnessing the power of the five Dragon Balls the Dragon Officers should number five strong, but after the Demon Army's assault on Dragonia only three officers remain!

Ruwalk

The Yellow Dragon Officer and Secretary of State

Tetheus

The Azure Dragon Officer and Secretary of Security

Cernozura

The Dragon Castle Administrator Cernozura is also a self appointed castle historian.

Dragon Knights

Rath

The Dragon Knight of Fire... Rath is born today and lives for killing demons.

Thatz

The Dragon Knight of Earth... the cynical Thatz was once a rebel until his love for gold lured him aboard.

Rune

The Dragon Knight of Water, Rune is an elf and has abilities the other two Dragon Knights lack.

Other Allies

Cesia

A half-demon fortuneteller with the ability to enhance the power of Dragon Slave possessed by her.

Zoma

Cesia's former friend and companion

Tindel

A faerie who has sacrificed much for her beloved Rune and her dying race.

Kitchel

Another thief loyal to Lykouleon. Kitchel possesses the powerful Three Treasures and is trying to get them to Dragonia.

Kingsleys

A faerie who was rescued from a demon and now accompanies Kitchel.

Delte

Lykouleon's trusted fortuneteller

Star Princess

Not much is known about this powerful princess but she has an affinity for Rath on several occasions.

Grimfish

The Star Princess's body guard. Both the Princess and Grimfish seem to be friendly to Lykouleon's cause.

Nohiro

A human on a mere on is says the dying faerie race. Has assisted Rune in the past.

The Villains of Dragon Knights

Nadil

The evil and justly feared Demon Lord Nadil had been slain by the Dragon Lord but his body was recently retrieved and resurrected by his loyal army. Now he once again presides over the Demon Realm, hungry for revenge.

Demon Officers

Shydeman

One of Nadil's generals. Shydeman led the successful attack on Dragoon that brought back the Demon Lord.

Shyrendora

Another general. Shyrendora is sister to Shyde man and vies to Tritaun who fights against her as one of the Dragon Officers.

Fedelta

Answering directly to Shydeman, Fedelta has become one of the most vicious officers in the Demon Army.

Lady Medreinea

Another officer in Nadil's army Medreinea has a ongoing rivalry with Fedelta.

Other Enemies

Bierrez

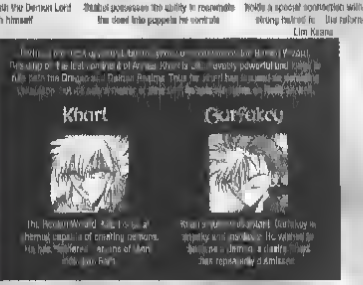
The infamous rogue demon Bierrez's loyalties lie not with the Demon Lord but with himself.

Saabel

The so-called "Cat actor of Corpses." Saabel possesses the ability to reanimate the dead into puppets he controls.

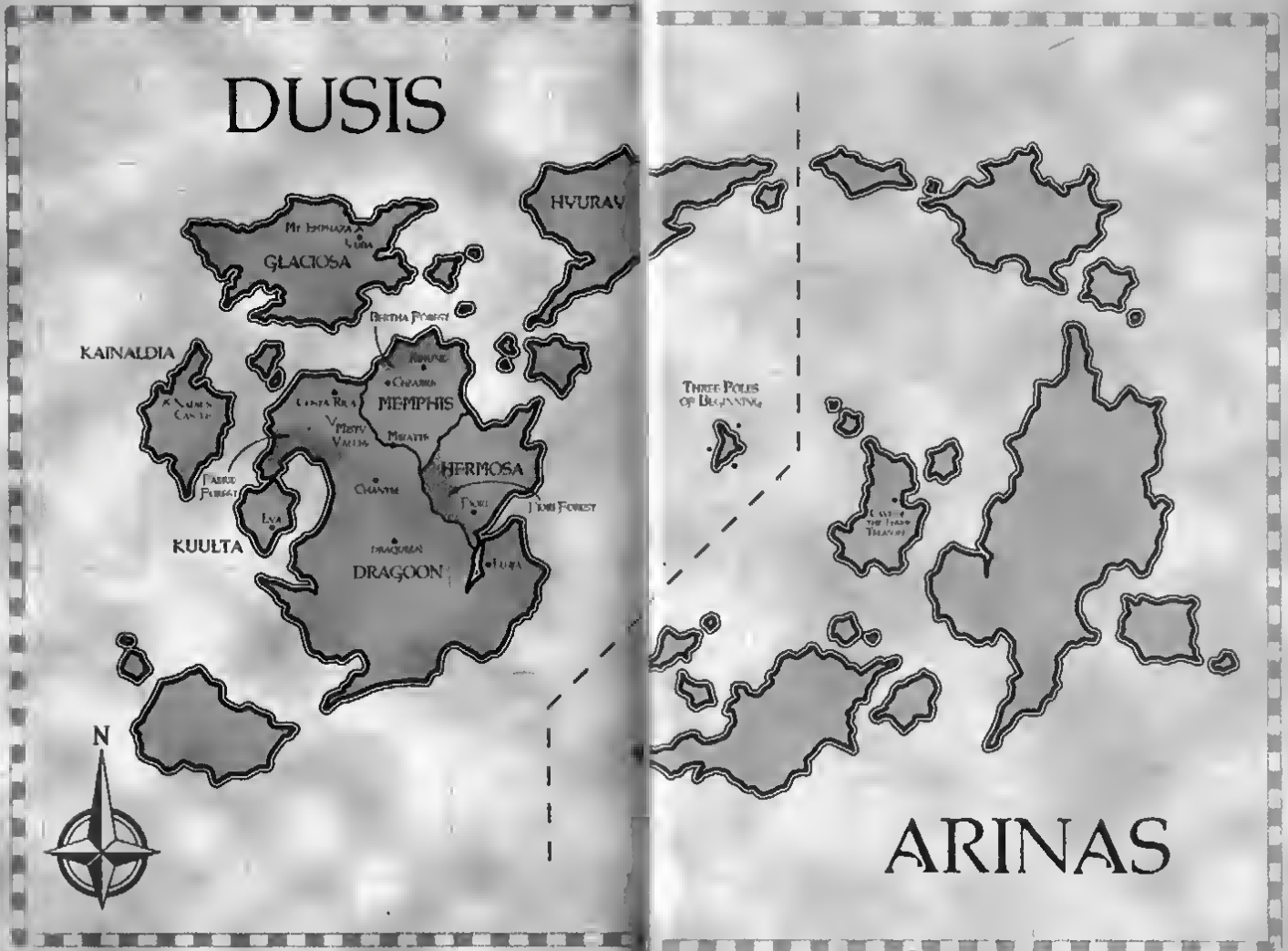
Leelu Reel

Small and powerful, Leelu Reel holds a special contempt with—and strong hatred for—the reformed Lim Kaana.



Khart

Garfelkey


DUSIS
HYURAV
GLACIOSA
KAINALDIA
MEMPHIS
HERMOSA
KUULTA
DRAGOON
N
THREE POLIS OF BEGINNING
ARINAS

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DRAGON KNIGHT'S
ドラゴン騎士団
A World Away

WHOOSH

SHUT UP!
THAT'S HOT!!
UGHHHHH!!
HEY, WAIT A SECOND! SOMETHING STRANGE IS GOING ON!
FROZEN--?!
MY LEFT HAND...
..IT'S FROZEN, BUT YET IT'S HOT.
HE WANTS TO SAY "THATZ IS THE STRANGE ONE."
DAM-MIT.
THIS SUCKS!!

I...
I HAVE A BAD FEELING ABOUT THIS...
UH...
...YOU WON'T BE PISSED IF I TAKE OFF, WILL YOU?
WHAT? YOU CAN'T LEAVE!
THAT'S LIKE GIVING UP IN THE MIDDLE OF BATTLE!
I KNOW.
BUT IT'S JUST THAT... THIS SWORD THAT I GOT FROM KITCHEL...
WHAT ABOUT IT?
IT'S UH...
...BEING SUMMONED BY SOMEONE.
WHOA!!

HE DISAPPEARED.

Dragon Castle
The Foreign World Kainaldia
In a separate building...
...are the Dragon Emperor and Empress
In motion...
Kitchel
Underground
Around here...
...is Cesta, Lim, and Zoma
Underground Sanctuary
Gil, Ringleys and Delte
Rune
Tetheus, Tintlet, Saubel and Dragon soldiers
Around here...
...is Thatz and Berrez
YEAH, BUT WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO KNOW THAT YET.
YOU CAN SEE THAT THATZ IS TELEPORTING SOMEHOW!
THE ABOVE SHOWS WHERE THE REST OF THE DRAGON CLAN IS.

WE ACTUALLY DON'T KNOW WHERE HE'S GOING YET.
PROBABLY HERE.
THEY WARP THAT?
WHERE'S HE TELEPORTING TO?
WHAT A TERRIBLE SOUND! WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
WAS IT AN EARTH-QUAKE?
CRCK
CRCK

CLANK
WHAT...?
BROTHER, I KNOW YOU'RE NO FOOL.
YOU KNOW WHAT POWER CONNECTS THE WORLDS.
IMPOSSIBLE!
QUITE A LOT OF ENERGY WILL BE NEEDED TO EXTRACT THE YUSURUGI MONSTER AND TELEPORT IT... EVEN MORE, SINCE THEY'RE TELEPORTING THE WHOLE BODY.
WHO IS STRONG ENOUGH TO HAVE SUCH A POWER?

HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN, BROTHER...
...ABOUT WHAT IS IN THE DEMON CASTLE?
IT IS THE POWER OF VIRTUE THAT CONTROLS VARAWOO.
...AND THE PERSON WHO HAS IT.
BUT THERE IS ANOTHER WHO IS ABLE TO CONTAIN VARAWOO'S POWER. THE PORTAL WAS OPENED BY THE POWER THAT WAS HIDDEN INSIDE OF THAT PERSON'S BODY.
HE'S REMEMBERED.
WE HAVE WHAT WE CAME FOR, RIGHT?

IT'S THE POWER OF VARAWOOH!
BUT IT WON'T WORK. THERE ARE HIGH-RANKING FAERIES HERE.
ARE YOU SURE?
YOU THINK YOU'LL BE SAFE BECAUSE THE DEMON WON'T WAKE UP WITHOUT THE KEY?
WE'LL SEE.

SO THERE'S A KEY...
.....
CAPTAIN!
WHAT ARE THEY TALKING ABOUT?!
OF COURSE. WE WOULDN'T COME UNPREPARED.
THOUGH I'VE NEVER SEEN IT, I KNOW THEY MEAN...

...YUSURUGI.
IN THE DISTANT LANDS SEPARATE FROM THE FOREIGN WORLD...
...LIVES A MOURNING MONSTER... A MONSTER WITH A LINK TO THE FOREIGN WORLD.

SOMEONE IS DEFINITELY SUMMONING ME.
BUT WHO ON EARTH COULD IT BE?

!!!
AIIEEEE!!
WAIT...
COULD IT BE?
IS IT THE SAME THING THAT CAME OUT OF THE SKY LAST TIME?!
THIS THING...

AAAAAAAHHH!!
.....!!
WHAT THE HECK'S THAT?!
IT'S HERE--!!
IT SEEMS TO BE SEARCHING FOR SOMETHING...
COME ON! IT'S MY JOB TO SEE THAT YOU GET SAFELY TO THE DRAGON LORD!
THAT'S THE THING THAT CAUSED THE EARTHQUAKE!
I WONDER WHAT THIS THING IS SEARCHING FOR?!
CAN'T YOU SEE I'M HURRYING?
HURRY UP!
I DON'T NEED TO BE TOLD WHAT YOU MEAN!
...BUT YOU'RE BEING REDUNDANT.
OKAY...
I DON'T THINK WE CAN TAKE THIS MONSTER.
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

?!
WHAT IS THIS?!
WE'D BETTER RUN!

WHAAAAT?!
NO WAY...!
RUN FASTER!!
OR, FLY FASTER!
I THINK... IT'S TARGETING FAERIES!
WHOA! WAIT! WAIT FOR ME!!
RINGLEY'S!
HUNT

THE KEY!
THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S THE KEY.
LORD NADIL GOT THE KEY A LONG TIME AGO AND KEPT IT WITH HIM.

...BUT I'VE ALREADY SPENT MY TIME AND ENERGY TO BRING HIM HERE. FRANKLY, I'M SICK OF WAITING.
I SHOULD GIVE YOU TIME TO DIGEST ALL OF THIS...

HE DISAPPEARED!!
DAM-MIT...!
I WON'T FORGET THIS!
I SENSE OF BUNCH OF ELEMENTS FROM DEMON POWERS...
I CAN FIGHT IT ON MY OWN.
BESIDES, I'VE DEFEATED IT BEFORE!

I'D BETTER FINISH THIS FIGHT AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. I HAVE TO CATCH UP WITH THAT GUY!
...AS WELL AS CESIA'S POWER, WHO NOW SIDES WITH THE DRAGON CLAN!
PLUS, NOW I HAVE THE POWER OF THE DRAGON CLAN...

SERVANTS OF THE EIGHT STONES...

HEY...!
CAPTAIN!
WHAT HAPPENS IF THEY HAVE THE KEY?
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I'M AFRAID OF THE WORST. THAT'S WHY I'M ASKING!
IS THIS IT?

FEDELTA.
WHERE IS SHE KEEPING IT?

WE'VE RAISED AND TRAINED THIS BODY. IT HOLDS THE FIREPOWER OF LORD NADIL.
WE'VE MADE IT STRONGER...
...SLOWLY BUT SURELY.

NO WAY.
FIRE SWORD OF FURY.
A BODY OF FIRE...
IT'S IN HIS BODY?!

IT'S JUST AN ILLUSION...
I WONDER IF I CAN TOUCH IT?
ZZZRRK!!
ONOMA.

I SEE. IT WAS JUST THE REMAINS, AFTER ALL. IT WAS A GHOST FROM THE PAST.
NOTH-ING NEW. THAT WAS WAY TOO EASY.
HM?

I HAVE ...
...POWER FROM THE DRAGON CLAN AND SOME FROM CESIA.
I DON'T HAVE THE FULL EXTENT OF CESIA'S POWERS THAT I USED TO HAVE...
...BUT IT'S STILL BETTER THAN BEFORE.
THAT'S RIGHT.
BEFORE THAT...
I STILL HAVE TO FIND CESIA.
THAT BASTARD!
THAT DAMN DRAGON KNIGHT REALLY HAS DISAPPEARED.
I HAVE TO CHASE ROOBA!

WHAT WAS THAT?
I HAVE TO ASK HIM SOMETHING.
!!

!!
WHAT PERFECT TIMING.
JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO ONE OF MY LITTLE HENCHMEN DISAPPEARED.
IT SEEMS I'VE LOST HIM.
I JUST HAPPEN TO BE LOOKING FOR HIS REPLACE-MENT.

OH, BUT YOU'RE NOT ONE OF US ANY MORE. YOU'RE NO LONGER A DEMON.
ARE YOU, BIERREZ?
IT'S TOO BAD THAT SHYDEMAN ISN'T HERE IN KAINALDIA.
!!
WITHOUT SHYDEMAN, I CAN'T MANIPULATE YOUR BODY.
I'LL JUST HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH MERELY CONTROLLING YOUR MIND.
THE DRAGON CASTLE!
...WITH FEDELTA.
HE'S GONE TO THE DRAGON CASTLE...

THEN YOU WANT ME TO REPLACE GIL?
IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU THINK.
I'LL PASS. DO YOU THINK YOU CAN REALLY MAKE ME SUCCUMB TO YOU?
SHYDEMAN AND I HAVE LEFT YOU TO YOUR OWN DEVICES FOR FAR TOO LONG.
I'LL SEND YOU TO SHYDEMAN AND HAVE HIM REMODEL YOUR BODY.
YOU WILL GO SEEK HIM OUT WITH THAT DESIRE.
UGH...!

！
カン
カン

THE BLADE OF SNOW!
.....!
THE BLADE OF SNOW IS HERE...?!
.....
IT MUST HAVE BEEN SUMMONED BY THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY.
!

THAT'S!
A FIRE SWORD?
THAT'S THE KEY THAT WILL UNLOCK THE SEAL ON YUSURUGI!
IT'S THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY!!
WHAT YOU HAVE IN YOUR HANDS...
...IS THE ONLY SWORD THAT CAN STOP THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY...
...THE BLADE OF SNOW!

IT'S UP TO YOU TO STOP IT!
DAM-MIT
BROTHER ...
THESE SWORDS ARE A SET?
SO I WAS SUMMONED BY THE OTHER HALF...
I GOT IT!!
TETHEUS!
SO WHAT IS YUSUFUGI?!

LOOK AT THE BLACK UNDER YOUR FEET.

I THOUGHT...
...I WANTED TO HOLD YOU FOREVER.
I WOULDN'T ABANDON YOU.
IT WAS A PROMISE... TO PROTECT ME.
AND I REPEATED IT IN MY MIND.
I TRIED TO REACH OUT TO YOU SO MANY TIMES... DID YOU EVEN HEAR ME?

WELL...
!
THIS WAY!
IMPRESSIVE!
EVEN I CAN'T FIGURE OUT MY WAY AROUND!
THAT'S THE POINT. WE DON'T WANT PEOPLE TO KNOW HOW TO GET AROUND THE CASTLE...
ESPECIALLY A THIEF LIKE YOU!

WAIT!!
I'M NOT A THIEF! I'M A TREASURE HUNTER!
THERE'S NOT MUCH DIFFERENCE...
...ESPECIALLY TO PEOPLE LIKE US.
THE ITEM THAT WAS IN LORD LYKOULEON'S POSSESSION FINALLY RETURNS HERE.

ゴォオオ
THE RELEASED LIGHT DRAGON GOD WILL BE RETURNED TO LORD LYKOULEON.
ITS WHAT'S LEFT OF RATH'S BODY.
IT WAS THE RED DRAGON...
...FIRE.

RATH WITHDREW FROM LIGHT AND FELT A DEMONIC PRESENCE IN THE DARKNESS THAT SURROUNDED HIM.
IS HE LOOKING FOR YORISHIRO? I HOPE NOT... I HOPE HE DOESN'T REACH THAT DEMON UNDERGROUND...
...FOR IN THE UNDERGROUND SANCTUARY IS RATH'S COFFIN.
WHAT I WISH FOR...
...AND WHAT I DON'T WISH FOR...
THERE IS NOTHING I CAN DO.
I CAN ONLY WISH THAT ALL MY DREAMS COME TRUE.

IS THIS IT?
YES. HE IS HERE.
PLEASE, HURRY AND OPEN THE DOOR...
BAADUM!!

WINGS
OF
LIGHT...?
AH...

I SEE.
THE DRAGON LORD'S FIRE DRAGON.

GOOD JOB...
... KITCHEL.
HE LOOKS PALE.
IT MUST HAVE BEEN LOTS OF WORK.
I'M SORRY TO HAVE ASKED YOU TO DO SUCH A DIFFICULT JOB. YOU DIDN'T GET HURT, DID YOU?
I DIDN'T GET HURT AT ALL. YOU SEE, I'M GREAT!
IT WASN'T DIFFICULT!
OH...
NO! NOT AT ALL!
THE LORD WOULDN'T LET ON.
...BUT HE DEFINITELY LOOKS LIKE HE IS LOSING HIS ENERGY.
I THINK SOMETHING HAPPENED WHEN NADIL BROKE INTO THE CASTLE.
...THEY WERE EVERY-WHERE.
AND THE TREASURES ..
IT WAS A FUN TRIP!

MY LORD!
I'M ONE TOUGH GIRL!
THAT'S GOOD TO HEAR.
I WASN'T WORRIED, THOUGH.
SOME OTHER TIME, THEN...
HEH...
NO PROB.
WE'LL TAKE A RAIN CHECK.
I'D LOVE TO HEAR ALL ABOUT YOUR EXCITING ADVENTURES...
...BUT NOW, AS YOU KNOW, THE SITUATION IS DANGEROUS. UNFORTUNATELY, WE DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME FOR PLEASANTRIES.
HE LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN PAIN.
I WONDER IF HE'S OKAY.
OH...
O-OKAY...!
MY LORD, I HAVE A CONFESSION TO MAKE!

FOR SOME REASON...
...OF THE THREE TREASURES, THERE'RE ONLY TWO HERE.
DID ONE BREAK?
UH...
NO! ONE GOT STUCK THIS STICK ON THAT THE LADY CESIA HAD AND UH...SMORGF MBRPH...
WHEW!
OH, THAT'S NOT BAD...
UM...
BUT...
WELL...
THERE'S MORE...

I USED ONE.
AND THE OTHER BROKE.
SO ONLY ONE BOTTLE OF TREASURE IS LEFT...
SORRY.
THAT'S OKAY.
YOU SEE...
...ONE BOTTLE IS ENOUGH.

MAY I TAKE A LOOK...?
!!
OOPS...
YES, OF COURSE!

IT'S A DIFFERENT KIND OF COLDNESS FROM...
...TETHEUS' HAND.
IT'S FROM HIS WARMTH BEING TAKEN AWAY.
OH...!
HIS HAND...
I'M SO SORRY...!
...IT'S SO COLD.
...WAS IT THE ONE SHAPED LIKE A BALL?
ONE THING...
THE TREASURE YOU GOT STUCK ON THE STICK...
I SEE...
IT'S CALLED THE DIORASIS.
IT'S ALMOST CLEAR AND LOOKS LIKE A DRAGON'S EYE.
THAT'S RIGHT!

AHHHHH!!
IT WAS MADE TO GO ON THAT STAFF.
IS THAT SO?!
な
な
OH...
WHAT A RELIEF!

AHA HA HA HA!
...SO WE PUT IT ON THERE OUT OF CURIOSITY. THEN, WE FREAKED OUT SINCE IT WOULDN'T COME OFF!
ACTUALLY, TINTLET AND I THOUGHT IT WOULD FIT ON THE STICK...
YOU MUST BE CLAIR-VOYANT ...
...TO KNOW HOW TO USE IT.
IT CAN OPEN A NEW WAY.
THE BALL CAN INCREASE THE POWER OF THE STAFF, BUT IT DEPENDS ON WHO IS USING IT.
I GET IT!
THANKS TO THAT ADDITIONAL POWER, WE WERE ABLE TO COME BACK HERE!
GOOD. THAT'S EXACTLY RIGHT!
I WONDER IF THAT MEANS I'M ABLE TO USE IT. TEE HEE!
NOPE.

HUH?
...COULD YOU DO ME ANOTHER FAVOR?
WELL, I FEEL BAD FOR ASKING, BUT...
...SARU-BASHION ...
THE MAGIC GUN, RAKIETA AND...
THE OTHER TWO OF THREE TREASURES ARE...

RAKIETA
SARU BASHION
YES SIR!
OF COURSE! I'D HAPPY BE TO!
WHAT IS IT? DO YOU WANT ME TO FIND MORE TREASURE FOR YOU?!
WHAT ARE THOSE SHINY WINGS I SEE EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE?
NO.
UNFORTUNATELY...
...IT'S NOT TREASURE HUNTING.
I WOULD LIKE YOU TO TAKE RAKIETA AND GIVE IT TO RATH AND CESIA.
...YOUR REWARD WILL BE TO KEEP EVERY TREASURE YOU FIND—MINUS THE SECRET TREASURES THAT I NEED.
TOO BAD.
ACTUALLY...
I SEE.
I'M IN! THAT'S TOTALLY FINE WITH ME!

UH...
HUH?
RATH...?
CESIA?
ARE YOU SAYING... WELL, THAT I HAVE TO GO BACK TO KAINALDIA?!
I SEE YOU DON'T WANT TO...
SURE... CONSIDER IT DOUBLED.
NO! I'LL DO IT!!
BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO DOUBLE MY REWARD!

I'D LIKE YOU TO GO BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE... BUT I MUST FIRST GIVE RAKIETA EXTRA POWER.
PLEASE WAIT.
IT SHOULDN'T TAKE TOO LONG.
OKAY. SO I JUST WAIT, THEN?
YES.
AND TRY TO GET SOME REST.
I'LL TAKE HER TO THE WAITING ROOM.

RASELEANE.
WE CANNOT KEEP HIDING HERE ALL THE TIME.
I UNDER-STAND...
AS THE DRAGON EMPRESS WHO CONSIDERS THE DRAGON CASTLE HER HOME, I'VE MADE UP MY MIND.
I ACCEPT EVERY-THING.
I HAVE FOR A LONG TIME HOW.

.....
I UNDERSTAND THAT IT IS THE BEST WAY FOR OUR COUNTRY...
...FOR DUSIS.
.....
I SEE...
YOUR DRESS IS GETTING DIRTY FROM MY BLOOD ...
RASE-LEANE...
ALL RIGHT ...
...IF IT'S WHAT YOU WANT.

BUT I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL. I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO...
...KILL RATH.
I CAN ENDURE WHATEVER IS TO COME.
BUT...
... UNDERSTAND THIS...

...IT HAS TO BE YOU.

I HAVE TO CHOOSE ONE?
YOU CANNOT...
...CHOOSE BOTH.
AND ONCE YOU CHOOSE ONE...
...YOU CANNOT SWITCH TO THE OTHER...
?!
IT'S NOISY OUTSIDE.
YES, IT IS.

I DON'T THINK THEY KNOW WE'RE HERE.
EVEN SO, PERHAPS WE SHOULD GO SOMEWHERE A BIT QUIETER.
ZOMA!!
I'M OKAY.
I TOLD YOU I'D FIND A WAY TO FOLLOW YOU. I WON'T BE SEPARATED FROM YOU, CESIA.
THANK YOU...
...ZOMA!

I WONDER WHO'S MAKING ALL THAT NOISE?
THATZ ...?
I DON'T SENSE RUNE NEAR HERE.
OR BIERREZ...?

...THE KEY TO AWAKEN YUSURUGI...
THE ONLY SWORD THAT CAN STOP THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY...
...IS THE BLADE OF SNOW!

TETHEUS!!
WITH THE BLADE OF SNOW, THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY WILL BE DESTROYED!!

CAPTAIN!!
IT'S NO USE! WE CAN'T GET CLOSE ENOUGH TO THEM!

THEY DISAPPEARED!!
LORD SHYDEMAN AND HIS BROTHER TELEPORTED SOMEWHERE ELSE...
...BECAUSE BOTH THEIR POWERS WERE TOO STRONG AND WOULD INTERFERE WITH OUR FIGHT.
!!

AAAARGH!
THATZ...
TETHEUS SHOULD BE ABLE TO TAKE CARE OF HIMSELF.
UGH!!
DAMN YOU!!
FIRST OF ALL...
...MY PRIORITY IS... TO MAKE SURE THE FAERIES' POWER OF VIRTUE ISN'T SUCKED UP.
UNH!

TINTLET!!
I KNOW...
I'LL LEAVE. BUT IT'S DANGEROUS FOR YOU TOO, RUNE..
BE CAREFUL.
SAABEL!!
TINTLET...
DRAGON SOLDIERS WILL GUIDE YOU ON YOUR WAY. NOW HURRY!
.....!
THANK YOU!

IT IS TRUE THAT YOUR SWORD MATCHES THIS ONE?
AND THAT IT IS THE ONLY ONE THAT CAN STOP IT?
BUT DOES THE SWORD'S BEARER COME INTO PLAY?! I'VE DEVOTED MYSELF TO THIS SWORD... I EVEN GAVE MY OWN BODY TO IT AS A SHEATH!
DO YOU HAVE THE SKILLS IT TAKES TO USE YOUR SWORD?!

BE-
SIDES...
...I KNOW WHAT MY GOAL IS. ALL I NEED IS TO PIERCE THE KEY WITH THIS SWORD...
...AND THE MONSTER YUSURUGI WILL AWAKEN!
HOW CAN YOU STOP ME?
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHERE OR WHAT IT IS!
UGH...
ALL I NEED IS A FEW MINUTES!
WE'RE DIF-
FERENT!
I MUST BE SMARTER, 'CUZ I DON'T NEED A LIFETIME TO GET USED TO THIS SWORD!

IS THAT SO?!
THEN PROVE IT!

YOU'RE RIGHT, SIR.
THE SHOCK-WAVE CREATED BY THOSE TWO SWORDS IS ENORMOUS.
UGH... SOME-HOW...
IT'S GETTING WORSE...

ミュウウ…

COULD THE BEAST BE AWAKENING?
JUST NOW...
...WHAT WAS THAT?
ズ
ル
ル
ル
...
...WAKE IT UP!
I CAN'T LET HIM...

!!
SOMEHOW, HIS POWER IS INCREASING--?!
I'M GETTING...
...USED TO THIS SWORD!

IT'S WORKING?!
THIS IS AMAZING!
THE BIGGER THE SHOCK-WAVE GETS, THE MORE POWERFUL THATZ BECOMES?!
UNH...!

THIS IS THE ONLY SWORD THAT CAN STOP YOURS.
IT'S NOT JUST FOR SHOW. IT'S THE REAL DEAL!
I DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME...
...DO I?
I CANNOT FAIL.

?!
HUH?

HOW ANNOYING!
DOES HE REALLY WANT TO KILL FAERIES SO BADLY?
WHAT?!

FEDELTA!!
WHAT ...?!
?!
HE TURNED TO ATTACK RUNE ALL OF SUDDEN!
I DON'T CARE IF IT HAS TO BE YOU.
!
HE MEANS...
...EITHER SAAREL OR I WILL DO?

YOU GOT IT!
WHY ARE THEY CONSTANTLY ATTACKING FAERIES?!
RUNE!
STAY AWAY FROM HIM!

I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
YOU'RE TRYING TO STALL.
!!
WELL, THIS WAS UNEXPECTED.
EXCUSE ME.

HUH?!
WAIT A MINUTE!
WHY ARE YOU SAVING HIM? ISN'T HE THE DEMON THAT BRINGS DEATH?
.....!
THE FIRST ...
THEN HE'S THE DRAGON KNIGHT OF WATER!
HE'S ACTUALLY A FAERIE?
SAABEL IS A FAERIE.
HE WAS THE FIRST FAERIE CHOSEN TO CONTROL THE WATER DRAGON.
SAABEL ISN'T A DEMON! I MEAN HE WASN'T A DEMON!
BUT I DIDN'T EVEN BECOME ONE WHEN I WAS ATTACKED A LONG TIME AGO.
DOES IT MEAN HE REALLY BECAME A DEMON?

...I SEALED WATER FOR HIS OWN PROTECTION.
I WONDER IF HE WILL EVER WAKE UP AGAIN.
WHEN I WAS ATTACKED BY YUSURUGI'S BLACK TENTACLE...
WHAT WAS YOUR PLAN?
WHAT DO WE DO WITH THAT FAERIE?!
WERE YOU GOING TO USE HIM TO AWAKEN YUSURUGI?! OR WERE YOU GONNA SUCK UP HIS SOUL AND USE IT AS BAIT?!
GOOD GUESS.
HIS USEFULNESS RAN OUT.
HOW DARE YOU?!
I WAS ABOUT TO DESTROY YOU! IT'S A WONDER YOU'RE STILL STANDING!

SORRY TO CUT THE CHITCHAT-- BUT I HAVE MISSION TO FINISH.
THERE'S A CERTAIN SLEEPING BEAUTY I MUST AWAKEN.
IF YOU DON'T MIND, I'LL BE TAKING THIS FAERIE'S SOUL.
HAVEN'T YOU HEARD ANYTHING I'VE SAID?
ALL I NEED TO DO IS STAB THE KEY AND I'LL HAVE WON.
YOU WON'T SUCCEED!!
THE KEY? WHERE IS IT? IS IT RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME?

NO! DON'T DO IT!!
THE KEY IS...THE BODY OF A FAERIE.

HARDLY ANY DEMONS EVER COME DOWN HERE.
NO ONE EVER COMES THIS FAR WITHIN THE CASTLE--SO THEY WON'T FIND US.
THIS IS NEAR MY ROOM.

I CAN TELL.
IT'S VERY QUIET HERE. MOST OF THE DEMONS MUST HAVE GONE TO THE OTHER WORLD ALREADY.
TO THE DRAGON LORD.
THAT'S WHERE THEY'VE GONE.

OH...
I SEE... IT MUST BE MORE DANGEROUS OVER THERE.
RUNE...
I WONDER HOW'S HE'S DOING?
ZOMA!
HELP!

I BROKE IT!!

HOW ABOUT THAT?!
NOW YOU CANNOT WAKE HIM UP--RIGHT?!

SHYDEMAN MADE ME THE SHEATH FOR THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY.
THATZ!
!!
FOR A LONG TIME, I PROTECTED THE SWORD WITH MY BODY, WAITING FOR SHYDEMAN TO TAKE IT OUT OF ME.
TAKE SAAREL AWAY FROM HIM! HURRY!!
I CANNOT GET ANY CLOSER!
SO YOU SEE, I'M PATIENT.
DON'T YOU SEE? IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT SHAPE THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY IS IN.

FORM DOESN'T MATTER...
...FOR FIRE...

...IS
THE
KEY!!

RISE AND SHINE!
HE STABBED HIM!!

SAABEL...

?!
WHOA...
CRACK!
IT'S NOT YOUR TIME YET...

ゴゴゴゴ…!!
?!

DELTE!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?!
PLEASE...
WAIT...

WHOA...
SOMETHING BIG IS WAKING UP!..!
IT'S SHELL CAN BE BROKEN...
..BY THE BLOOD OF A FAERIE.
BUT WHOSE BLOOD?
NO WAY...
!

AS WE SPEAK, A TERRIBLE THING IS HAPPENING IN THE BASEMENT OF THE SANCTUARY!
WE TOOK MS. TINTLET OUTSIDE. WE'RE HEADING BACK TO THE SANCTUARY RIGHT NOW.
THE OTHER TWO MEN HAVE ALREADY ESCORTED MS. TINTLET TO THE SAFE HOUSE.
!
DRAGON SOLDIERS...
HUH?
TINTLET IS AT A SAFE HOUSE?
SO IF IT WASN'T TINTLET'S BLOOD...
...THEN WHO'S...WAS IT?
YES.
I THINK I KNOW WHAT'S GOING ON. COULD YOU PLEASE TAKE DELTE AND RINGLEYS TO WHERE TINTLET IS?
!
OI...

I DON'T THINK FAERIES ARE SAFE IN THE SANCTUARY ...
AT LEAST NOT ANY-MORE...
I'VE GOT TO GO.

UGH...
THAT DIDN'T SOUND GOOD...! THIS PLACE IS ABOUT TO COLLAPSE!
LET'S HURRY UP AND GET OUT OF HERE!

SAABEL...!!
RUNE!!
THIS ISN'T OVER YET!
I'LL GET YOU NEXT TIME!

THIS IS SUPPOSED TO BE A SANCTUARY?
WHAT...
OH! GIL!!
YOU CAN'T STAY HERE! THE WHOLE PLACE IS COMING DOWN!
THAT'S?
HUH?
WHY ARE YOU HERE?

GIL, HURRY!!
THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN...
WE GOTTA GET OUTSIDE FIRST!!
.....
?
AN EARTH-QUAKE?
NO, THAT'S NOT IT...! BUT WHY'S THE CASTLE SHAKING?!
ガゴー

SAABEL...

IF YOU HADN'T HAVE WOKEN UP SOONER, YOU WOULD'VE BEEN SUCKED UP.
WHO IS THIS?

WHO ARE YOU?
WHO...?

IS THIS ANOTHER TRICK?

WHAT?!
THE AIR! IT FEELS...!!

ITS...
...HUGE!
WHAT IS THIS THING?!

A POISONOUS HAZE?!
THAT'S DEADLY TO US! AND THERE ARE ALREADY ONLY A FEW FAERIES LEFT...!!
?!

IF YOU INHALE ITS POLLEN, YOU'LL CONTRACT A DEMON FEVER!!
TRY TO TAKE SHALLOW BREATHS!
THIS IS RIDIC-ULOUS!!
ARE YOU REALLY ASKING ME NOT TO BREATHE?!
A SMALL NUMBER OF FAERIES HAVE THE ABILITY TO PURIFY AIR...
THAT'S WHAT TINTLET IS TRYING TO DO!
SO, WE'LL BE OKAY FOR A WHILE.

WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT RIGHT NOW IS SAABEL!
HE'S INSIDE OF YUSURUGI!
AND LET'S NOT FORGET THE SCORE I HAVE TO SETTLE WITH THAT FIRE DEMON!!
!
RUWALK!
LONG TIME, NO SEE! I DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE BACK!
IS THIS REALLY POISONOUS SMOKE?!
YEP.

WHAT THE HECK IS THAT?
THE DEMONS SUMMONED IT.
IT'S CALLED YUSU-RUGI--OR SOME-THING.
FEDELTA AWAKENED THE MONSTER WHEN HE STABBED SAABEL WITH THE FIRE SWORD OF FURY.
I BELIEVE THAT MONSTER IS A FIRE ELEMENT BEING, BUT IT MAY POSSESS SOME EARTHEN PROPERTIES AS WELL.
ミシャ…
#REALLY?
IT CAN DO THAT?
THE SANCTUARY IN THE BASEMENT HAS BEEN TOTALLY DESTROYED
DEMONS BROUGHT THIS MONSTER HERE FROM SOME OTHER WORLD. IF WE DON'T GET RID OF IT, IT WILL KEEP POLLUTING THE AIR--AND DUSIS WILL BE DESTROYED.
I'M GOING TO ASK THE EARTH DRAGON TO FIND OUT FOR SURE.

IF I'M RIGHT, IT MEANS THIS MONSTER IS ALSO DESTROYING THE EARTH'S CRUST AS WE SPEAK.
THE KEY TO BEATING IT IS THE FAERIE SAABEL.
IF WE EXTRACTED HIM FROM THE MONSTER'S BODY, PERHAPS IT WOULD AFFECT YUSURUGI...
...LIKE MAYBE IT WOULD CHANGE ITS FORM.
BESIDES, IT'S NOT RIGHT FOR US TO LEAVE SAABEL'S CORPSE INSIDE OF THE BEAST'S BODY.
!!

ゴゴゴ…
ARE YOU SURE HE'S DEAD?
ｶﾗﾝ…

I DON'T KNOW. IT'S LIKE HE DISAP-PEARED INTO THIN AIR.
I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR A WHILE.
BY THE WAY, WHERE IS TETHEUS?
IS THERE SOMETHING YOU WANT TO TELL ME?
OH.
.....
I WISH WE HAD MORE HELP FROM FAERIES, BUT SO MANY HAVE BEEN KILLED.
I WAS JUST THINKING THAT I DIDN'T KNOW IF LORD LYKOULEON HAS ENOUGH ENERGY TO CLEAR THE POISON FROM THE AIR.
.....
KNOWING THE LORD, HE'S GOING TO PUSH HIMSELF TO DO AS MUCH AS HE CAN.
THAT GUY—

!!
WE NEED TO HURRY IF WE'RE GONNA CATCH YUSURUGI!

!!
THATZ! GO AHEAD! GO AFTER HIM!
HUHH
PREPARE YOURSELF, YOU FIRE RAT!

YOU DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT...
...DO YOU?

THATZ!!
!!

I DON'T HAVE MUCH TO FIGHT AGAINST YOU...BUT THIS IS BETTER THAN NOTHING.
IT'LL HAVE TO DO.
!!
HUH?
FIRE?

IT'S STUCK!!

IT'S POINTLESS FOR YOU TO RUN.
THERE'S NO PLACE TO HIDE. THIS IS WHERE YOU WERE ORIGINALLY A DEMON.

SO YOU'LL BE ABLE TO FIND ME NO MATTER WHERE I HIDE...
IS THAT IT?

I TOLD YOU, IT'S POINTLESS TO RUN.
!!
THIS DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.
IT SEEMS THAT SHE HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM...
UNFORTUNATELY FOR YOU, YOU'RE WRONG.
I DON'T HAVE A DEMON SPIRIT INSIDE ME ANYMORE.
OH, I SEE. YOU'RE A MEMBER OF THE DRAGON CLAN NOW.
THAT DOESN'T MAKE A DIFFERENCE, THOUGH.

DAM-MIT...!
WHAT'S WRONG? CAN'T THINK OF ANYTHING ELSE TO SAY? YOU'RE REPEATING YOURSELF!
.....
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH ME... BUT YOU, ON THE OTHER HAND...
I'M CONCENTRATING MY POWER ON CONTROLLING YOUR SPIRIT. ONCE I'M DONE, YOU'LL BE RESTORED TO YOUR NATURAL SELF.
ALTHOUGH... IT WON'T BE ENOUGH TO TURN YOU INTO A DEMON AGAIN.

UGH...!

UGH!!
DAM-
MIT!!

YEAH! LET'S GET BACK!
!
YOU GOT HIM?
RUWALK!!
HURRY!

HOPEFULLY THIS DOES SOMETHING TO THE MONSTER...!

Dragon Knights 24 END

DRAGON KNIGHTS

ドラゴン騎士団

Illustrations

My Life

By Mineko Ohkami

OH, A PAPERBACK WILL BE PUBLISHED, AND A COVER PAGE IS BEING DRAWN

IN THIS, THE 24TH VOLUME, THE STORY PROGRESSES QUITE A BIT. HERE'S SOME MORE TIDBITS OF INFO...

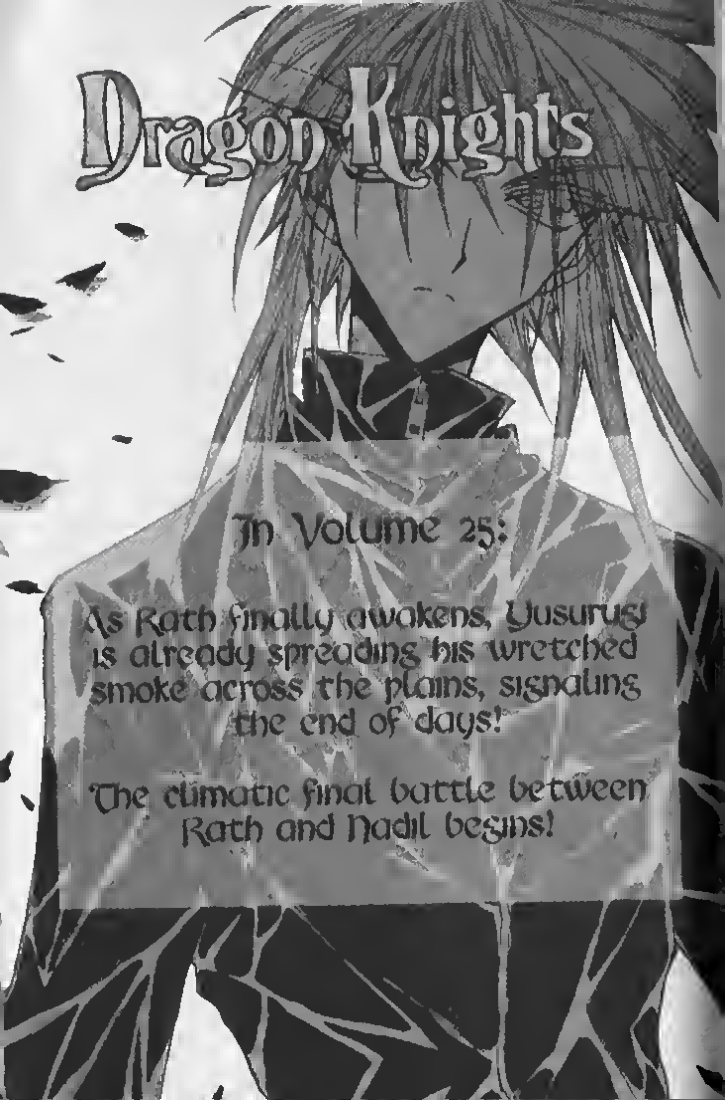
http://neko.g-com.ne.jp/mineko/

I GOT ANOTHER CAT.

MAMA IS WEARING AN EUROPEAN FOLK COSTUME.
MAMA
RU CHAN
HMM...
I THINK USED TO PLAY WITH HER UNCLE CAIN.
CAIN
RICA WAS FREAKED OUT BY RU CHAN IN THE BEGINNING, BUT SHE'S USED TO HER NOW.
RICA
SCARY.
RICA'S NERVOUS FACE IS QUITE CUTE (HA HA).
SHE IS WAGING HER TAIL.
KUKO
IS SHE GLAD?

SINCE MY YOUNGER SISTER JUST HAD A BABY, I ENDED UP TAKING CARE OF HER CAT RU-CHAN FOR A WHILE. IT'S A FEMALE RUSSIAN BLUE

I HAVE TO MAKE SURE TO KEEP THE TOILET LID DOWN!
WHEN I TRIED TO PEAK INTO THE BATHROOM, RU-CHAN OPENED THE DOOR BY HERSELF. SHE'S SLEPT ON THE FLOOR EVERYDAY (HA HA)
THE BATHROOM DOOR IS SLIGHTLY AJAR.
UNTIL MY SISTER'S BABY (A BOY) GETS BIG ENOUGH, I WILL KEEP RU-CHAN.
IT'S ACTUALLY MY EIGHT PINKY FINGER...NOW I STICK MY PINKY UP ALL THE TIME (HE HA).
BY THE WAY, I BROKE MY FINGER...
IT'S MY FIRST TIME WEARING A CAST.
AS I WAS SEARCHING FOR THE NEAREST ORTHOPEDIST ON THE INTERNET, I ALSO LOOKED UP ANYONE WHO BROKE A FINGER FROM HITTING IT ON A CAT'S BACK. I ONLY FOUND RESULTS FOR CATS THAT WERE "HIT BY A CAR" AND "BROKE A BONE" JUST WHAT I THOUGHT, NO ONE HAD BEEN INJURED BY A CAT BEFORE.
THE DOCTOR CONFIRMED THIS.
OUCH.
CRACK
THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.
MY PINKY HIT RU-CHAN'S BACK..
OH.
IT HAPPENED WHEN I WAS TRYING TO CATCH RU-CHAN.
...I HAD A TUMOR THERE. (IT WASN'T MALIGNANT) THE BONE WAS FLIMSY, LIKE A PIECE OF PAPER. IT WOULD'VE BROKE EVENTUALLY--IT WAS ONLY A MATTER OF TIME. ACTUALLY, MY INJURY WASN'T TOO BAD, SINCE I ONLY HIT MY CAT'S BACK.
ACCORDING TO THE X-RAY..
ALTHOUGH, I DO HAVE TO HAVE SURGERY EVENTUALLY OTHERWISE, IT MAY JUST KEEP BREAKING.
NEXT UP IS VOLUME 25. PLEASE CHECK IT OUT!
Ai Yazawa


Dragon Knights
In Volume 25:
As Rath finally awakens, Yusurus is already spreading his wretched smoke across the plains, signaling the end of days!
The climatic final battle between Rath and Nadil begins!